

AUGUST 1986

TAIG

TWIN CITIES ATARI INTEREST GROUP

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Treasurer: Dick Johnson Secretary: Paul Franson
Newsletter Editors: Cory Johnson (473-4190) & Dave Stengel

Membership renewal

You may renew your membership at the meeting, or send a check for \$15.00 made out to TAIG, and on a sepearte piece of paper, your name, and address to

Marshall Keith 413 Connelly Lane, Burnsville, MN. 55337.

For more information, call Marshall at 435-1072.

Article submission

Articles should be submitted in standard text files (Atari Writer, Hometext, Speedscript).

If you don't own a wordprocessor, you can enter an article into BASIC using REM statments. Or, send legibly written or typed text (make any schematics legible also, we can't reprint what we can't read) to

Cory Johnson 1835 Shadyview Circle, Plymouth, MN. 55447

Dave Stengel 3230 Shadyview Lane, Plymouth, MN. 55447

Articles may also be dropped off at

Wizard's Work 18th and 36th, New Hope, MN.

If you wish, you can also upload your article to the BBS. Leave a message to the sysop stating that the upload was an article. The BBS number is 612/522-2687

DEADLINE

Deadline for submission is the 10th of the month. Any articles recived after the 10th will be held until the next newsletter.

Newsletter exchange

If you are another Atari interest group, and you wish to exchange newsletters, please mail your latest newsletter to:

1835 Shadyview Circle Plymouth, Mn 55447.

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PROTECT SWITCH FOR THE 810

By Steven Ingalsbe

If you have an Indus or Rana disk drive, you know how nice it is to have the "protect" switch on the front of your drive. I am going to show you how to add this feature to your 810. As a bonus, you will also be able to write to the back side of your disks without mutilating them.

First I will cover what is happening in your drive. Inside the drive is a Light Emitting Diode (LED) and a phototransistor. When you insert a disk that has a notch, the light from the LED passes through the hole in the disk and is received by the phototransistor. This in turn causes the phototransistor to allow the voltage on its emitter to be applied to its collector. This voltage tells the drive circuitry that it is OK to write to the disk. If you insert a disk that does not have the notch, then the light can not get to the phototransistor, and the drive circuitry will know that it can not write to that disk. What we are going to do, is to fool the drive circuitry into thinking that the disk is what ever mode we want. We do this by installing a switch onto the front of the unit, that ties into both the LED and the phototransistor.

Remove the top of the 810 drive by loosening the 4 screws at the corners of the top. You will have to take the screw covers off to get to them. Gently lift the top straight up and set it aside. You will now be able to see all of the good stuff inside your drive. The board on the left side is the "side board". This is the board that we will be working on. You will need the following things:

DPDT Center off switch

Solder (no acid core!)

Wire (anything from 20 to 30 guage)

At the rear of the side board, you will see 2 connectors with 5 pins each. The one closest to the back of the drive is the power supply connector (J102). The connector next to it (closer to the front of the drive) is the one that

we want (J101). For clarity, we will call the top pin pin 1, and the bottom one pin 5. Here is a list of the pins and the color of their wires:

1=BLACK

2=GREEN

3=GREEN

4=RED

5=BLACK

(NOTE: Pins 2&3 are tied together)
The switch that we are going to add has 6 terminal posts on the back. They will be 2 rows of three. We will number them like this:

up

L1 + + R1

L2 + + R2

L3 + + R3

down

Now for the actual wiring. Run the following wires:

J101 connector		switch
1	to	L2
2	to	L1
4	to	R3
5	to	R2

You don't have to cut any wires or runs to do this mod. If you decide to take it out at a later date, the board will still be usable. Just "Tack" solder the wires to the connector solder contacts. Now you have to drill a hole for the switch. Just above the BUSY light on the front of the unit, is a logo panel. This panel is about 1" square. If you peel this off, you can mount your switch here. If you ever decide to take the mod out, the panel will cover up the hole that you drilled. Drill a hole to mount the switch you wired (usually 1/4" - but you will have to check your switch). Be careful not to break any wires as you mount the switch. You are now done. Put the cover back on your drive and try it out. If it doesn't work, then recheck all of your wiring.

What you have done:

All that we have done is allowed you to "tell" the drive that you either have a notch, or don't have a notch on the diskette. With the switch in the UP position, the phototransistor is shorted out and the voltage is allowed to pass. The drive "thinks" that the

phototransistor sees the LED's light. This allows the drive to write to ALL disks, weither or not it has a notch.

With the switch in the CENTER position, the drive acts normally. It will write to the disk only if it has a notch.

When the switch is placed in the DOWN position, then the disk can NEVER be written to. This is because we have made the voltage bypass the LED, so it can never light.

You now have a PROTECT switch on your 810 drive. You will never have to use sticky protect tabs again. You will also never have to notch another disk.

TREASURERS REPORT - August

Dick Johnson

Beginning Balance	246.65
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- Expenses

Floppy Disk Purchases	41.60
Aug Antic Disk	13.73
Stamps	57.25
Newsletter	46.20
St. Louis Park Rec Center (3 Months)	105.00

+ Income

Sting's share of Amateur Fair	25.00
Refund of Bank service chg	10.80
Membership 1-new 4-renew	75.00
Raffle	14.00
Analog Disk	27.00
Antic Disk	52.00
TAIG Disk	8.00

Ending Balance	194.67
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MINSHADOW

by Activision

(a review for the 8-bit)

by David Stengel

Mindshadow is fun becuae it introduces something different in the way of a storyline. The thing is, you've just been dumped off of a ship, and you're stranded on this island not knowing who you are, anything about yourself, or your past history. You've developed amnesia, and the whole purpose of the game is to try and regain your memeory.

This is a graphics/text adventure, and I must say that the graphics are very impressive. The story is very well written, and you get to go places like London, and Luxemburg (great for those would-be tourists). The characters are lively (except for one who likes to sleep, and there's no friggin' way to wake him). Some people may find it hard to get going when they first start playing. The game is a little tricky at first (when trying to get off the island). One important clue to follow would be to examine everything VERY carefully, and to take any object you can (no matter how useless it seems).

So there you have it. Short, but sweet. You realize it's difficult reviewing and adventure, but you don't want to give anything away. I really wish this article could be more extensive (and that's why I'm writing all this right know), but that's just the way it goes.

Commodore Mouse Controller for Your Atari!

(Or- The Mouse That Jack Built)
by Jay Pierstorff

Reprinted from "Mid Michigan Atari Magazine"

There has been much talk of mice and mouse controllers lately. The new Atari ST's come equipped with their own mouse (mice? meeces?). Anyway, those of use who have an Atari of the 8-bit persuasion have watched with great envy, wishing we too, could have mice. Even if we could buy an ST mouse for our 8-bitters (which we can't) it wouldn't work with our existing "joystuck" programs.

But while wandering the aisles of the computer stores, I noticed a Commodore product beaming through the glass. "The Commodore 1350 Mouse for the 128" was printed on the package. The price was less than \$50. Those lucky 128 owners! Too bad Atari hasn't made one for their computers.

The Commodore and Atari have always been real friendly about using the same joystick varieties. Would this... Could this... Might this mouse work? The plug looked very much like a standard joystick connector. I bought it and took it home.

I could tell my 130XE was nervous about the whole works, but undaunted, I loaded a trackball program plugged in the mouse... but wait, the plug wouldn't stay in! Upon close examination of the connector, I found that it was about 1/8 inch too short to reach the connector pins (Commodore computers don't recess their joystick ports quite as much as Atari). I was puzzled for a moment and then I thought about using a joystick extension cable. Ha! I quickly found my extension cable plugged into port 1 and the other end plugged perfectly to the mouse!

With trembling fingers I slid the mouse accross the desk, and then... nothing. The cursor was on the screen but the mouse yawned.

It would not controll the cursor, not even a little. now what... I tried to think, maybe it would work with a Koala or Touch Tablet program! I booted and failed.

Maybe it was a "joystick emulator!" A joystick in mouse clothing! I loaded the graphics editor of "The Print Shop", IT WORKED! It was a joystick emulator all along! Suddenly, it occured to me I should probably calm down. I got down off the computer table and tried a few more programs. Everything that would normally run with a joystick was working with this imitation mouse.

The only non-workable feature of the 1350 mouse is the right button. The left button is the standard fire button on a joystick. The right button is connected to pin 9 (the Atari paddle controller pin).

The Commodore mouse is very useable, even though your computer thinks it's a joystick, you will think it's a mouse. It really does an amazing job of convincing you. It feels good in your hand and moves smoothly across any flat surface. A clean desk or "mouse pad" will give best results. A mouse pad is a rubber backed thin cushion that gives more control over mouse movements. For mouse maintenance, the rubber coated, steel ball can easily be removed for cleaning.

The 1350 Mouse is different from a true optical driven mouse. A true mouse has proportional control. The faster you move the mouse, the faster the cursor will move. The 1350 mimics this action but it can't move the cursor any faster than the joystick would. Slower cursor movements are imitated by the mouse delivering short, stop and go pulses to the computer.

A true mouse will always take the same desktop travel to move the cursor from one screen edge to the other. The 1350 will move the cursor at maximum speed as long as the 1350 is in any motion at any speed. That means a fast long push

will not move the cursor as far as a short, slow push. That's not really a problem though, it's just a difference that can be worked with. It can even be an advantage for limited desktop space.

The Commodore 1350 Mouse worked with all games and programs that require a joystick. Some are improved by the mouse and some are more suited to joystick control. The type of programs that are best suited to the mouse are those that require precision movements of cursor of gunsight centering on the screen. The least suited are programs requiring continuous scrolling movements. They often require picking the mouse up and starting again if you run out of counter space. Drawing and doodling programs worked fabulous. Koronis Rift scores improved markedly. Rescue on Fractalus was confusing! Donkey Kong was... different. It just depends on the type of movement involved. Many games took on a whole new feel when played with the mouse. Many were even more fun with mouse than with joystick!

Do you really need a mouse? Yes, you do! If you own and use a joystick, you will definitely enjoy owning a 1350 mouse. I wouldn't part with mine. Don't throw your joystick away yet, but mine is seeing less use since I let the mouse in the house! The Commodore mouse is not just for the C128 anymore! It's one of the best darn joysticks since the old Atari licorice stick!

Editor's Notes
by Cory Johnson

TAIG SURVEYS

We had hoped to have the TAIG surveys compiled, and ready to print by this newsletter (1 month), which it was. BUT we only received 10 surveys (including mine) and I didn't believe that this provided an accurate cross reference of the Taig membership, so we will wait for the results until next month.

BRING THOSE SURVEYS TO THE NEXT MEETING!

or mail them to me at the address on the cover of the newsletter.

From what we did compile, it was obvious that the print size of the newsletter wasn't popular, so, we have gone to a larger size type. This makes it easier to read (if you had problems with compressed you should probably see an optometrist), but it also cuts the content of the newsletter by well over half what it used to contain. Personally, I liked compressed, but we'll have a go at this.

You can upload your article to the BBS, so there is really no excuse to put writing an article off anymore. We do need your articles, and input so please contribute.

TAIG

The Taig Disk Of The Month
By David Stengel

This disk is mostly comprised of Utilities (submitted by Steve Ingalsbe), since this seems to be the most popular type of program when I took the poll at the last meeting. There is a new and interesting disk operating system called Rainbow Dos. It has the ability to load pictures and use different fonts (some of which are provided on the disk; as for the font maker, I think Creat-a-font and Instedit may work, though I am not certain). Also, on the telecommunication side is MPP express, which is a very nice program. I have previously used Express with the 1030, before my modem fried out and I got the MPP. The only difference is the fact that there is no Touch Tone dialing, only pulse. There is ring detector software for the 1030, and a copy program called SYNCOPY. On the back side of the disk is a library program that will help keep track of all you full disk programs as well as single files. It is written in basic, but has very speedy routines. You may have seen this program before, but this is an enhanced version over the original. Here is a list of the filenames:

A71FONT.LST
FONT5
DISKLIB2.BAS
DLXDIAL.BAS
MPPEXP.OBJ
DISKLIB2.DOC
FONT1
RING1030
FONT2
SYNCOPY
FONT3
FONT4

Meeting Notes 7/27/86
(ed. note: The secretary wasn't at the last meeting, so I'm attempting to fill his shoes this month)

Steve called the meeting to order at 7:15

Steve then proceeded to announce, and introduce all of the officers to the general membership. Steve then read the June minutes.

John Stanley volunteered to fill the position of "Program Chairman" who is responsible to coordinate the demo's from meeting to meeting.

It was decided that TAIG will begin to sell blank disks to club members, making use of the clubs bulk purchasing abilities.

5 people were interested in starting a "COMPUTE" SIG.

Gordy Landsman explained that for \$75.00, Atari will replace old 1027 printers with the new XM801 printer.

Steve then told of his talk with Bill Wilkenson of OSS. Among other tidbits, he found out that OSS has finished with the 8 bit 3.5" drives, but Atari still has some design problems with them.

It was also mentioned that a company on the east coast has re-made the Percom disk drive ROM's, no name was mentioned though. Future Systems has purchased Indus, and old warrenties are NOT valid. A new warrenty will cost \$25.00. The Ramcharger (CP/M compatibility) for the Indus drive will now cost \$99.00. Syncromesh II is expected to sell for \$15.00.

There was no interest in forming a beginners SIG to meet before the general meeting.

A software writers SIG was also voted down.

Wizard's Works told us they are now servicing 8 bit Atari's.

TAIG raffled off 2 programs "Hardball" and "Forbidden Forest" after covering the cost of the programs, the club made \$14.00.

A review of the 320XE
By Steven Ingalsbe

A lot of people around town are starting to modify their 800XL's to 256K of RAM. Did you know that there there is a way to upgrade your 130XE to 320K? I am going to discuss some of the advantages and disadvantages of upgrading your machine. First off you should know that the upgrade is quite a bit like the 800XL mod; it makes your 320XE a 130XE compatible, almost! You will loose the ability to use the banked memory for video. This is why you can't use ATARIWRITER PLUS on a 256XL. You will not be able to use it on the 320XE either. However, there are a lot of other programs that will work just fine (about 99% of the programs!). One for instance, is PAPERCLIP. There is a program called the Paperclip Memory Adjuster, that allows you to tell PAPERCLIP that you have extra memory; up to 320K. As far as I know, this is the only word processor that allows you to use all of your extra memory. There is also a modified DOS 2.5 for the 320XE. It allows you to have 1 Dual density, and 1 Single density Ramdisk, along with BASIC XE in extend mode. The Ramdisks really save alot of wear and tear on you phisical drives. If you are using Sparta Dos, then your extra memory can be configured as a 2050 sector Ramdisk, or as a 1500 sector Ramdisk. The smaller Ramdisk allows you to use BASIC XE in extend mode along with your Ramdisk, the bigger one doesn't work with BASIC XE.

So, now you know most of the advantages and disadvantages. There is only one more disadvantage to talk about; the actual construction of the mod. If you are not quite good at dealing with microcircuits, and you do not have access to professional quality equipment, do not attempt the mod. The 130XE has most of its components soldered onto the printed circuit (PC) board. The PC board is extreemly fragile, and it is quite easy to lift some runs while de-soldering components. You will have to un-solder 8-16 pin Ramchips, and 1-40 pin chip (Pheripheral

Interface Adapter), and install sockets onto the board. (NOTE: ypu do not have to install sockets, but it is highly recomended. You don't want to unsolder any of those chips twice, the PC board will not survive!) If you get past that part ok, then the rest of the mod is all down hill. You add a new chip and some jumpers and you are all done. My system has been running now for two weeks, with no problem at all. You should not have any heat or power problems, you can safely goto 576K without over taxing the system. If you decide to add 1 meg of RAM, then you will have some real problems. The ATARI power supply can't handle that load, and the chips give off more heat than the computer was designed to handle. A new powersupply and a fan are a must.

There is one more thing that I should tell you. ATARI allows you to trade in your UNMODIFIED mother board if you are having problems. For a flat fee and your old board, you get a new board. If you do this mod, ATARI will not allow you to trade in the board; so you will either have to fix it, or find someone who will work on it. Either way it could be a problem.

If you want to do the upgrade (or any of the other upgrades including: Quarter Meg XL, 288K 800, 320XE, 576XE, or the 1088XE) you can get the HARDWARE disk from TAIG for \$6.00 (plus postage).

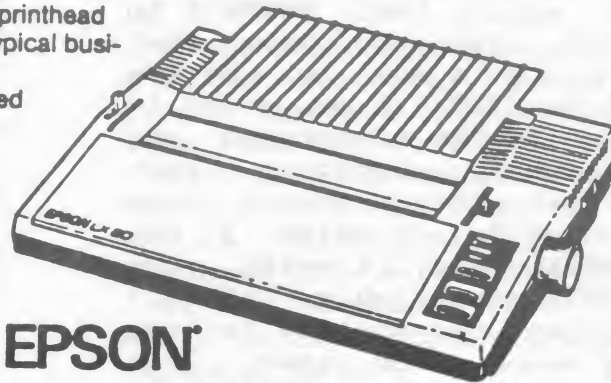
If you want the upgrade, but don't feel that you can do it, I will install 320K into your 130XE for \$100. You can reach me on the TAIG/SPACE BBS (522-2687).



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New Hope (North Side of Bldg)

545-2136

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4309 Suncliff Drive
Egan Mn 55122.



Next TAIG meeting
Sunday, August 24
TAIG 7:00 pm.

Note the date change!!